



# 42 Ways To Save Water

Water Conservation Tips  
From the City of Yakima  
Water/Irrigation Division

# **Water Lawns and Plants in Early Morning or At Night**

By watering your lawn and plants at times other than in the heat of the day, less evaporation occurs so more water soaks in the soil

# **Run Your Clothes Washer and Dishwasher Only When Full**

Doing full loads of clothes and dishes can save up to 1000 gallons of water each month and saves you money on your electric bill

# Shorten Showering Times

Shortening your shower time by as little as 1 minute each day can save as much as 150 gallons each month

# **Set Your Lawn Mower to The Right Height**

Setting your lawnmower to cut grass at about 2 inches encourages deeper, healthier roots and helps your lawn retain moisture

# **Use Drip Irrigation for Plants and Shrubs**

Drip irrigation delivers water directly where it's needed

Drip irrigation also uses much less water than more traditional sprinkler irrigation

# **Install a Water-Efficient Showerhead**

Water-efficient showerheads are inexpensive, easy to install and can save as much as 750 gallons of water each month

# Consider “Grasscycling”

Leave grass clippings on the  
lawn as you mow  
Grasscycling helps your lawn  
retain moisture and provides a  
free source of fertilizer

# Plant Right For Your Site

The Yakima Valley is a semi-arid desert  
Choose outdoor plants that are  
native to our area

Ask at a local nursery for help  
In choosing plants that require  
less water

# **Soak When Washing** **Dishes By Hand**

Instead of letting the water run when hand washing dishes, fill the sink with water once and let the dishes soak. When you're ready, refill the sink with clean water and use it to rinse your dishes.

# Set Sprinklers In The Right Place

Make sure you set your sprinklers so that they water your lawn and plants rather than the house, sidewalk, street or driveway

# **Consider Composting** **Instead of Garbage Disposal**

Use food waste as  
free fertilizer rather grinding it  
up in the garbage disposal  
and washing it down the drain

# Use The Refrigerator To Cool Drinking Water

Instead of letting the tap run until water is cold enough to drink, fill a pitcher with water and put it in the refrigerator

That way, you'll always have cold water

# **Use A Pan to Rinse** **Fruits and Vegetables**

Instead of letting the tap run,  
fill a pan with water and use  
it to rinse off fruits and vegetables

# **Use Mulch On Plant** **And Flower Beds**

Spreading a layer of organic mulch around flowers and plants saves water, time and money

# Sweep Instead Of Washing

Use a broom instead of a hose  
to clean off porches, sidewalks  
and driveways

# **Cover Pools** **And Hot Tubs**

Covering pool and hot tubs when they're not being used reduces evaporation and retains heat, which saves on power bills

# **Check for Leaks** **And Fix Them**

Make sure toilets, facets, sinks,  
showers, bathtubs and any other  
household item that uses water aren't  
leaking  
Leaks waste water

# **Use Fish Tank Water To Feed Plants**

When cleaning out a fish tank,  
use the nutrient-rich water  
to provide plants with an  
outstanding source of food

# **Don't Water If** **You Don't Have To**

Before watering lawns, flowers or plants,  
check to see if the soil is still wet 1 to 2  
inches below ground level  
If the soil at that depth is still wet,  
you don't need to water

# Plant Ground Cover On Slopes

Water will run down a slope that's  
with flower or even grass  
Planting slopes with ground cover  
greatly reduces water runoff

# **Use Organic Material** **To Control Weeds**

By layering organic material (mulch) on flower and plant beds, you'll be better able to limit the growth of weeds which compete with other plants for water

# **Limit Use of Fertilizer**

By using less fertilizer, you help protect the ground water supply AND you make your lawn, plants and flowers more drought resistant

# **Use A Commercial Car Wash**

Commercial car washes recycle water  
Instead of washing your car at home  
in the driveway and watching all of  
that water run into the sewer system,  
using a commercial car wash saves  
water

# **Turn Off The Tap** **While Brushing Teeth**

Instead of letting the water run while you're brushing your teeth, turning the tap on only when you need to rinse can save up to 25 gallons of water each month

# **Let Your Dishwasher** **Do Its Job**

Most new dishwashers don't require dishes to be rinsed before being put in the dishwasher

Not rinsing dishes before you put them in the dishwasher can save up to 35 gallons of water each month

# Insulate Hot Water Pipes

Insulating hot water pipes results in  
hotter water coming out of the tap  
faster, lower water usage and  
lower power bills

# **Don't Use the Toilet** **As A Waste Basket**

Throw used tissues in the wastebasket  
instead of in the toilet

Remember, every flush of the toilet  
uses as much as 2.5 gallons of  
water

Flush Responsibly

# **Wash Dark Clothes In Cold Water**

Washing dark-colored clothes in cold water saves water, lowers your power bill and helps those clothes stay vibrant and colorful

# Uses Nature's Own Soil Protector

Leaving lower branches on trees and shrubs, and allowing leaves to accumulate on the soil, helps the soil stay cooler and reduces evaporation

# **Let Your Lawn Go** **Dormant This Summer**

Water your lawn only once every  
2 to 3 weeks this summer

While the grass may not be as green  
as normal, it will simply be dormant,  
not dead and will spring back to life  
the next time it rains

# Use “Big-Drop” Sprinklers

Use sprinklers that deliver large drops of water close to the ground  
“Misting” and “Small-Drop”  
sprinklers use more water and  
allow water to evaporate before  
it reaches the ground

# **Don't Drown Your Plants and Flowers**

Water plants and flowers only  
when they need it

Believe it or not, more plants and  
flowers die from over-watering  
than from under-watering

# Vary Your Automatic Irrigation System Schedule

Instead of setting your automatic irrigation system to follow the same Watering schedule all summer, vary your settings depending on weather conditions

More frequent watering when it's hot,  
less frequent watering when it's not

# **Wash Your Hair** **With Less Water**

Turning the tap off when washing your hair and back on only to rinse your hair can save up to 150 gallons of water each month

# Wash Your Pets Outside

Washing your pets outside on a part of your lawn that is in particular need of water uses water twice AND avoids having to clean up inside the house

# **Aerate Your Lawn** **Once or Twice A Year**

Aerating, or poking holes, in your lawn allows water to more easily get to where it's need, at the roots

# **Turn Off The Tap While Shaving**

If you shave over a sink, turn off the tap while you shave and you can save up to 300 gallons of water each month

# Put Your Plants On Ice

Burying an ice cube in the soil of a planter or flower pot will deliver a constant, cool drink of water while avoiding overflow

# **Take Showers Instead of Baths**

The average bathtub requires 50 gallons of water to fill while the average shower uses only about 20 gallons of water

# **Pest-Resistant and Drought-Resistant Plants**

Pest-resistant plants reduce the need for pesticides which can harm the water supply, and drought-resistant plants, obviously, require less water to survive and thrive

# **New Household Appliances, Etc.**

Newer toilets, water heaters, dishwashers, clothes washers, showers, etc. use less water than older models

# Xeriscape (Not Zeroscape)

Xeriscaping involves using plants and flowers that are low water users

Xeriscaping also can include using rocks and other decorative material to create a beautiful, water friendly yard



**Thanks for doing  
your part to help  
conserve water!**

*City of Yakima  
Water/Irrigation Division*